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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/853,382	05/11/2001	Brett A. Stahl	STA 0290 R	6441

7590 11/27/2001  
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Southfield, MI 48075

EXAMINER

GRENDZYNSKI, MICHAEL E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1774

DATE MAILED: 11/27/2001

4

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/853,382

Applicant(s)

STAHL, BRETT A.

Examiner

Michael E. Grendzynski

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 May 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 7-12 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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## DETAILED ACTION

### *Reissue Applications*

1. This application is objected to under 37 CFR 1.172(a) as the assignee has not established its ownership interest in the patent for which reissue is being requested. An assignee must establish its ownership interest in order to support the consent to a reissue application required by 37 CFR 1.172(a).

The assignee's ownership interest is established by:

(a) filing in the reissue application evidence of a chain of title from the original owner to the assignee, or

(b) specifying in the record of the reissue application where such evidence is recorded in the Office (e.g., reel and frame number, etc.).

The submission with respect to (a) and (b) to establish ownership must be signed by a party authorized to act on behalf of the assignee. See MPEP § 1410.01.

An appropriate paper satisfying the requirements of 37 CFR 3.73 must be submitted in reply to this Office action.

2. The original patent, or an affidavit or declaration as to loss or inaccessibility of the original patent, must be received before this reissue application can be allowed. See 37 CFR 1.178.

3. The reissue oath/declaration filed with this application is defective because the inventor's residence and mailing address is not provided.

4. The reissue oath/declaration filed with this application is defective because the error which is relied upon to support the reissue application is not an error upon which a reissue can be based. See 37 CFR 1.175(a)(1) and MPEP § 1414. A statement such as "claiming less than I had a right to claim" is an unacceptable statement of an error. Specific changes or amendments to the claims must be identified. If new claims are presented, their difference from the original claims must be pointed out.

*Election/Restrictions*

**DETAILED ACTION**

5. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-6, drawn to a cover sheet, classified in class 428, subclass 195.
- II. Claims 7-12, drawn to a layer that has been laser embossed, classified in class 428, subclass 156.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

6. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

7. Newly submitted claims 7-12 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: Inventions I and II are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions have different functions. Group I is a cover sheet that can be used for embossing or, alternatively, as a receptive medium for sublimation dye transfer. The invention of Group II (as claimed) does not function in either of these capacities.

8. Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 7-12 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

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*Claim Rejections*

9. Claims 1-6 are rejected as being based upon a defective reissue declaration under 35 U.S.C. 251 as set forth above. See 37 CFR 1.175. The nature of the defect(s) in the claims is set forth in the discussion above in this Office action.

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

*Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

11. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

12. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kildune (5266257). Applicants claim an article comprising a base layer and a release coating thereon (e.g., a vinyl compound of silicone). Kildune discloses a method of making embossing rolls wherein a sheet comprising a backing layer of plastic and an embossed layer comprising a releasing material (e.g., a vinyl-based releasing material such as polyvinyl chloride). See col. 1, ll 1-19 and col. 5, ll 35-47. This sheet is then used to emboss a thermoplastic surface (i.e., the imprintable surface comprising polyvinyl chloride. See col. 5, ll 35-47 and col. 4, ll 17-21. The limitations of the claims are met by the disclosure of the reference.

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*Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

13. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

14. Claims 4-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kildune, as applied to claims 1-3, above. With regard to claims 4 and 5, even though product-by process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process.” *In re Thorpe*, 227 USPQ 964, 966. Once the Examiner provides a rationale tending to show that the claimed product appears to be the same or similar to that of the prior art, although produced by a different process, the burden shifts to applicant to come forward with evidence establishing an unobvious difference between the claimed product and the prior art product. *In re Marosi*, 710 F.2d 798, 802, 218 USPQ 289, 292 (Fed. Cir. 1983). *See* MPEP §2113.

15. Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sawka (US 5405675). Applicant claims and article comprising a base layer with a release coating thereon, wherein the release coating is embossed. Sawka discloses a multilayer film comprising (1) a base layer and (2) a protective layer thereon, wherein multiplayer film is embossed. *See* col. 3, ll 57-62. The base layer is equivalent to applicant’s base layer—it comprises a plastic material. *See* col. 4, ll 58-67. The protective layer, moreover, is equivalent to applicant’s release coating. It comprises a material having releasing properties (e.g., polyurethane). *See* col. 6, ll 33-40 and col. 7, ll41-45. With regard to the claimed pattern-forming ability of the article, “it is elementary that the mere recitation of a newly discovered function or property, inherently possessed by things in the prior art, does not cause a claim drawn to those things to distinguish

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over the prior art.” *In re Swinehart et al.*, 169 USPQ 226 at 229. Since the Sawka medium teaches all of applicants’ claimed compositional and positional limitations, it is inherent that the medium functions in the manner claimed by applicants. The burden is upon the “applicant to prove that the subject matter shown to be in the prior art does not possess the characteristic relied upon.” To date, this burden has not been sustained.

With specific regard to claims 4-5, even though product-by process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process.” *In re Thorpe*, 227 USPQ 964, 966. Once the Examiner provides a rationale tending to show that the claimed product appears to be the same or similar to that of the prior art, although produced by a different process, the burden shifts to applicant to come forward with evidence establishing an unobvious difference between the claimed product and the prior art product. *In re Marosi*, 710 F.2d 798, 802, 218 USPQ 289, 292 (Fed. Cir. 1983). *See* MPEP §2113.

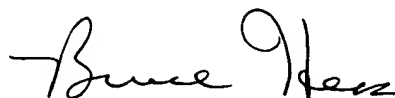
### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael E. Grendzynski whose telephone number is 703-305-0593. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays, from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm.

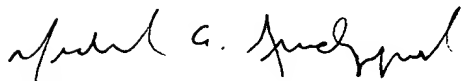
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Cynthia Kelly can be reached on 703-308-0449. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-5408 for regular communications and 703-305-3599 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3599.



BRUCE H. HESS  
PRIMARY EXAMINER



Michael E. Grendzynski  
Assistant Examiner  
November 6, 2001